

*City of Burien*

BURIEN PLANNING COMMISSION

August 28, 2013

7:00 p.m.

Multipurpose Room/Council Chambers

MINUTES

*To hear the Planning Commission's full discussion of a specific topic or the complete meeting, the following resources are available:*

- Watch the video-stream available on the City website, [www.burienwa.gov](http://www.burienwa.gov)
- Check out a DVD of the Council Meeting from the Burien Library
- Order a DVD of the meeting from the City Clerk, (206) 241-4647

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Jim Clingan called the August 28, 2013, meeting of the Burien Planning Commission to order at 7 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Jim Clingan, Greg Duff, Ray Helms, Butch Henderson and Brooks Stanfield

Absent: Joey Martinez and Nancy Tosta

Administrative staff present: David Johanson, senior planner; Chip Davis, Community Development director

**AGENDA CONFIRMATION**

**Direction/Action**

**Motion** was made by Commissioner Duff, seconded by Commissioner Henderson, to approve the agenda for the August 28, 2013, meeting. Motion passed 5-0.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Robbie Howell, 15240 20<sup>th</sup> Ave SW:** A letter regarding the Transit Corridor Redevelopment Gap Analysis was submitted on her behalf for distribution to the Planning Commission and the City Council.

**Chestine Edgar, 1811 SW 152<sup>nd</sup> St.,** said the written/electronic comments submitted during the previous meeting's public hearing need to be noted in the minutes. She also said the proposed amendments are confusing to her because they are expressed in percentages instead of square footages.

She said she toured Legacy's Youngstown Flats project in West Seattle that morning and it appeared to her to be built for singles or unmarried couples and there is no recreational space for children. She said the common recreation space on the building's roof is unusable for any recreation other than sitting and talking; it would be too dangerous for children to use. She said the photos in the August 28<sup>th</sup> Planning Commission packet must have come from the City of Burien because they did not reflect the Youngstown site. She said the Youngstown site has no open space at ground level, therefore there is no outdoor open space for children at all and only the roof for adults. She said the balconies are uncovered and are unusable in bad weather and the Juliet balconies are so narrow there is no room to do anything except open the sliding door. She said her observation is that what she has seen at Youngstown is "sorely inadequate" in terms of recreation space and it looks like most of the recreation is expected to go offsite to Delridge Park a few blocks away. She said Burien doesn't have that kind of nearby recreation space to offset the lack of onsite recreation, other than Town Square Park, which is not a recreation space for children or even adults

picnicking. She said Youngstown has 195 units, which tells her there will be at least 300+ people living there, and there is no way Town Square Park can accommodate that number of people. She noted that the other options are to walk over to the small Dotty Harper Park or to the former Community Center property, which is not developed as a park. She said if this kind of development is being considered at Town Square, additional recreation facilities will need to be provided to offset the lack onsite.

Ms. Edgar said she also noted that Youngstown has underground parking but all off the offsite street parking was filled at the time she was there, between 10 and 11 a.m., and Burien does not have that available for apartment dwellers.

She summarized that the recreation space being proposed is inadequate for Town Square and the kind of residents who typically occupy it; she encouraged the commissioners, if they insist on voting on the proposed amendments, to make it a one-time exception and to look at what it really looks like when people try to live in it.

**Robert Richmond, 17431 Ambaum Blvd S**, who said he was speaking from the perspective as a real estate agent, asked how many new storefronts are being planned and left to the real estate agents to try and fill. He said he expected not many, because commercial space is not where developers make their money and so they are willing to let the storefronts sit open for years. He said they make their money on residential space. Then he asked who is going to occupy the residential side.

He said Burien has enough empty commercial store fronts and asked who is going to occupy them. He pointed out the vacant storefronts around Bartells and noted that they have been vacant for about two years. He asked how long the developer plans on having vacant storefronts and whether the developer can absorb the vacancies financially speaking or will they be thinking “if you build it they will come.” He said he guessed that no one will come.

Mr. Richmond said that, speaking from his real estate background, it is not feasible to put up more commercial space. He suggested the developers go to 160<sup>th</sup> and Ambaum, where there are two acres to work with; or to 138<sup>th</sup> and First Avenue where there is an acre and a half. He requested that they not keep commercial land undervalued and instead move their project to a different area that might not pencil out for them but to move out of the downtown.

**Debi Wagner, 1520 SW 158<sup>th</sup> St.**, said she has a number of concerns about the downzoning of this area and the type of development that’s going in. She said some people believe this will lead to subsidized housing.

She said she believes that the developer’s expectation that the project will draw people willing to pay higher rents is premature because she believes there isn’t much to attract people to live in downtown Burien, unlike The Landing in Renton that has great restaurants, park space and a multiplex theater. She said putting subsidized housing next to the Town Square condos is going to create problems for both projects of both not having recreational space and both not using Burien for entertainment or recreation.

Ms. Wagner added that the City won’t get anything out of it because of the temporary tax exemption, so if it is subsidized housing the only thing the City will get is franchise fees for Comcast and other service. Those fees, she said, won’t help keep the area neat and tidy and you don’t want problems in the middle of the city giving the area a black eye. She said the project needs to be very high quality apartments to meet the vision for Burien and to maintain the quality that all Burien citizens expect in Town Square. She asked the commissioners not to downzone.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

### **Direction/Action**

**Motion** was made by Commissioner Duff, seconded by Commissioner Stanfield, and passed 5-0 to approve the minutes of the August 14, 2013, meeting.

## NEW BUSINESS

None.

## OLD BUSINESS

### **a. Discussion and possible recommendation – Zoning Code Amendments – Downtown Commercial Zone Multi-family Recreation Space Requirements**

David Johanson reviewed the proposed changes to the private and public recreation space requirements for multi-family housing in the Downtown Commercial zone. He compared the current requirements to the originally proposed amendments and to the changes made to create an alternative proposed amendment as requested by the commission following the public hearing on August 14<sup>th</sup>.

The commissioners discussed at length how the numbers were arrived at and whether the target market, young professionals, even want or would use large decks on their apartments; the feeling was expressed that decks are not as much of a priority to the younger generation as high-end finishes in the interior of the apartments.

Chair Clingan said he, too, visited the Youngstown Flats. In response to comments by Burien residents made during the public comment portion of the agenda, he said he specifically asked how many parking spaces were allotted per unit at Youngstown and was told there are two spaces per unit. He said he also asked if Burien's project is going to be a mixed use building and was told maybe a couple thousand square feet would be for commercial uses.

Mr. Clingan noted that the commission is not being asked to downzone the Downtown Commercial area; the proposed amendments address a couple of building requirements in the zoning code. He reminded his fellow commissioners that they are not being asked to design the proposed apartment building but to provide builders the ability to invest their money in Burien and build good projects. The estimated rent of \$1.85 per square foot quoted by Legacy's representatives puts the rents in the \$1,400 - \$1,600 range or higher, which he said indicates to him that they will be high quality units. He encouraged the commissioners that haven't toured Youngstown Flats to do so.

### **Direction/Action**

**Motion** was made by Commissioner Duff to adopt the 10 percent gross floor area of residential, 24 square feet for private space, 30 percent of units must have private space, 51 percent of remaining units shall have alternative private space, and eliminate the fee-in-lieu, which is what was proposed at the August 14<sup>th</sup> Planning Commission meeting. Commissioner Henderson seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-1-1, with Commissioners Clingan, Duff and Henderson voting in favor, Commissioner Helms opposed, and Commissioner Stanfield abstaining.

## PLANNING COMMISSION COMMUNICATIONS

Commissioner Helms asked if it would be possible to look at the nuisance ordinance to address trash and clutter on balconies and decks. Mr. Johanson said staff will pass Commissioner Helms' comments on and see if the Council wishes to add it to the work program.

## DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Chip Davis advised the commissioners of two training opportunities coming up on the same day. The first, A Short Course on Local Planning, is being offered from 1 - 4 p.m. Tuesday, October 1, free to the commissioners as part of the Washington Chapter American Planning Association conference. The second opportunity, an overview of the Open Public Meetings Act and how it pertains to boards, commissions and committees, is being offered that evening from 7 - 9 p.m. in the Normandy Park City Council Chamber, free to the commissioners as part of the City's insurance coverage.

Mr. Davis also informed the commissioners that the City Council has adopted interim zoning regulations for recreational marijuana, and the commissioners will be conducting a required public hearing next month as part of the public involvement phase of developing permanent regulations.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

### **Direction/Action**

Commissioner Stanfield moved for adjournment. Motion carried 5-0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

**APPROVED:** September 11, 2013

/s/ Jim Clingan, chair  
Planning Commission